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ABSTRACT

Mexicans are the largest group of immigrants to the United States, and approximately 60-70 percent of this group comes from rural areas. This book challenges Anglo professionals in health care, education, and child care to learn more about families from rural Mexico and to incorporate this knowledge into their work. The book's content is based upon in-depth interviews with 27 Latino professionals; their direct quotes are combined into detailed descriptions of family beliefs and practices. Part I covers life in Mexico, attitudes about the United States, the frightening and sometimes dangerous experience of immigration, initial adjustments, housing, encountering prejudice and stereotypes, Latino values, the role of the Catholic church, and family structure. Part II focuses on the beginning years as a family, including attitudes toward marriage, having children, family planning, pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum care, early infant care, baptism, machismo and sex roles, and parent roles. Part III is concerned with child-rearing practices up to the teen years and covers play, television viewing, sleep, eating, toilet training, children's temperament and personality, limit setting with babies and older children, girls' and boys' roles, and family time. Part IV discusses school experiences of immigrant Mexican children and their parents; compares schooling in the United States and Mexico; and examines issues related to special education, adolescent development, gang involvement, and dropping out. Part V discusses health care concerns, folk healing, and communication with patients. Appendices contain the interview questions; background of Latino professionals interviewed; a map of Mexico; and lists of suggested readings, parenting education curricula, and Latino organizations. (SV)

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